



CITY OF HAYWARD

AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 03/28/06

AGENDA ITEM _____

WORK SESSION ITEM WS #2

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Library Director

SUBJECT: Overview of the Hayward Public Library System

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council review and comment on this report.

BACKGROUND:

The Hayward Public Library currently provides its customers with a wide range of services and a variety of print and media materials. The Library provides these services and materials in a traditional service model in which library staff checks out all materials for customers. Library materials are primarily displayed "spine out," which assists in locating the items, but is not visually appealing. Media materials (e.g. DVDs, CDs, books on CD, and digital audio) comprise over 40% of the circulation, but account for less than 12% of the total inventory. Reference desks are staffed by professional librarians during all business hours despite the fact that over 50% of customer inquiries are either simple directional or technical questions ("Where can I find tax forms?", "How do I log on to this computer?") that do not require their level of expertise. Internet stations are in high demand and there are often people waiting to log on throughout the day. The library offers two "storytimes" per week at each branch, none in the largest demographic language (Spanish), and none on Saturdays to accommodate working parents. Adult programming is infrequent; there are no programs geared for young adults (11-17).

In response to continued budgetary constraints, positions have been frozen since FY 2003-2004, during which time library staff has decreased by 17% through attrition. In response to this staff reduction, library hours were cut by 11% beginning in FY 2004-2005. Current budget forecasts support a continuation of this freeze through the 2007-2008 fiscal year, and the budget for new materials is expected to remain at the current level. Nevertheless, Hayward Public Library can improve the products and services available to customers within the constraints of current staffing levels and hours of service by adopting practices successfully developed at other library systems.

Improvements to the library will focus on all three core areas: work processes, use of technology, materials and programming. To enhance customer service and maximize the use of available staff, the library will install self-check machines in both the Main and Weekes libraries. Similar improvements will be made to other aspects of the work flow. Support staff will assist on the reference desk to answer simple questions so that professional librarians will be available to provide greater outreach to the community. To ensure that new materials more directly satisfy customer demand, materials purchases will be based upon popularity as indicated by circulation

figures, and these materials will be displayed using retail techniques (e.g. "face out" displays). Popular "storytime" programming will be increased and will be presented in Spanish and other languages. At the same time, staff will develop additional adult and young adult programming.

While working with staff to implement these improvements, the Library Director will gather data during the coming year to validate the effectiveness of these changes and meet with community stakeholders to assess their impression of library services. This information will serve as a benchmark for discussion on the planning of future library services for Hayward—with particular emphasis to the building of new and/or remodeled library facilities.

To support this report, there will be a powerpoint presentation that reviews some key findings on current library services and provides ideas for future planning. A hard copy of this powerpoint presentation will be distributed at the meeting.

Prepared and Recommended by:



Lisa Rosenblum, Library Director

Approved by:



Jesús Armas, City Manager